

NOW SHOWING



Winslet is amazing

MOVIE: Mountain Between Us

STARRING: Kate Winslet, Idris Elba

RATING: M

REVIEWER: Vicky Roach

SHOULD your plane crash in a remote mountain range without a functioning emergency beacon, you'd be hard pressed to find a better companion-in-crisis than British actor Idris Elba.

Especially in his latest incarnation as a leading neurosurgeon.

Ben Bass (Elba) can improvise an IV drip out of found objects. He's familiar with all the tell-tale signs of exposure and remains extraordinarily calm in an emergency.

If Elba/Bass was stranded on a mountain top, he'd be hard pressed to find a better match than the fabulously feisty Kate Winslet (He keeps his Hackney accent. She nails an American one.)

Especially in Winslet's current incarnation as a fearless photojournalist.

Alex Martin's (Winslet) profession might be of less obvious practical use in her current predicament, but she's remarkably resilient.

The strangers meet at a crowded airport when their flight is grounded by an impending storm.

She has a wedding to get to – her own. He has emergency surgery to perform. They charter a small plane. While it's a foolhardy decision, pilot Beau Bridges' mid-air stroke is what ultimately causes the crash. And from here, the strangers' skill sets prove strangely complementary.

For times go to eventcinemas.com.au



Finally, a movie sequel

MOVIE: Blade Runner 2049

STARRING: Ryan Gosling, Harrison Ford, Jared Leto

RATING: MA

REVIEWER: Wenlei Ma

FOR 35 years Blade Runner has been hailed as a cinematic gem, first as a cult classic and then by the mainstream.

With its visual wizardry and ethically ambiguous tale, Blade Runner is a hard act to follow. Especially after so long, any sequel was going to have to really justify its existence.

Blade Runner 2049 does.

In the masterful hands of director Denis Villeneuve, the dystopian story does more than mere justification, it cements itself as one of the best films of 2017 and Villeneuve as one of the most exciting directors of today.

Ridley Scott - who is a producer on this instalment - is well known for his ability to frame a beautiful image, if not necessarily for carrying off his narrative ambitions. Well, Villeneuve is next-level because Blade Runner 2049 is a breathtakingly gorgeous

film to look at and that's also in no small part thanks to cinematographer Roger Deakins.

It may come in at over two and a half hours but it's well-paced and manages to earn its long run time. There's not a single superfluous shot as you sit there, drinking it in, staring in awe at every magnificent visual and aural detail.

From a cascade of water spilling over a dam to the geometrical symmetry of a records room, or even in its use of light and shadows, there's not an inch on the

screen that hasn't been meticulously set-up for maximum impact.

Of course, it can't match the 1982 version for its visual heights, and while original director Scott did borrow from the likes of Fritz Lang in crafting his industrial look, Villeneuve's aesthetic seem more like refinement, albeit a first-class one, than an inventive leap forward.

The plot itself is fairly straightforward and that's probably to its benefit, allowing the visuals and Gosling's brilliantly

restrained performance to shine. Side note, Gosling has really perfected purposeful slow walking - what a sight.

Villeneuve has requested that story detail be kept to an absolute bare minimum so audiences can experience it without the burden of foreknowledge.

Set 30 years after the original, Gosling plays an LAPD detective, a Blade Runner, who digs up a secret that threatens to destroy the fragile social order; it also leads him to Rick Deckard (Harrison Ford), last seen running off with Rachael.



HIKE FOR HOMELESS

Saturday 28th October 2017 | Jubilee Park Trails Toowoomba

The inaugural Hike for Homeless is aimed at raising awareness of homelessness in Toowoomba and much needed funds to ensure the Basement Soup Kitchen can continue to provide lunch time meals, blankets, clothing and essential services to people who are homeless or at high risk of homelessness in Toowoomba.

Prices: 5km \$25 Adult, \$10 Children under 17, \$60 for a Family.

10km \$35 Adults, \$20 Children under 17.

20km \$60 Adult, \$30 Children under 17.

To register go to www.mycase.com.au/events/hikeforhomeless

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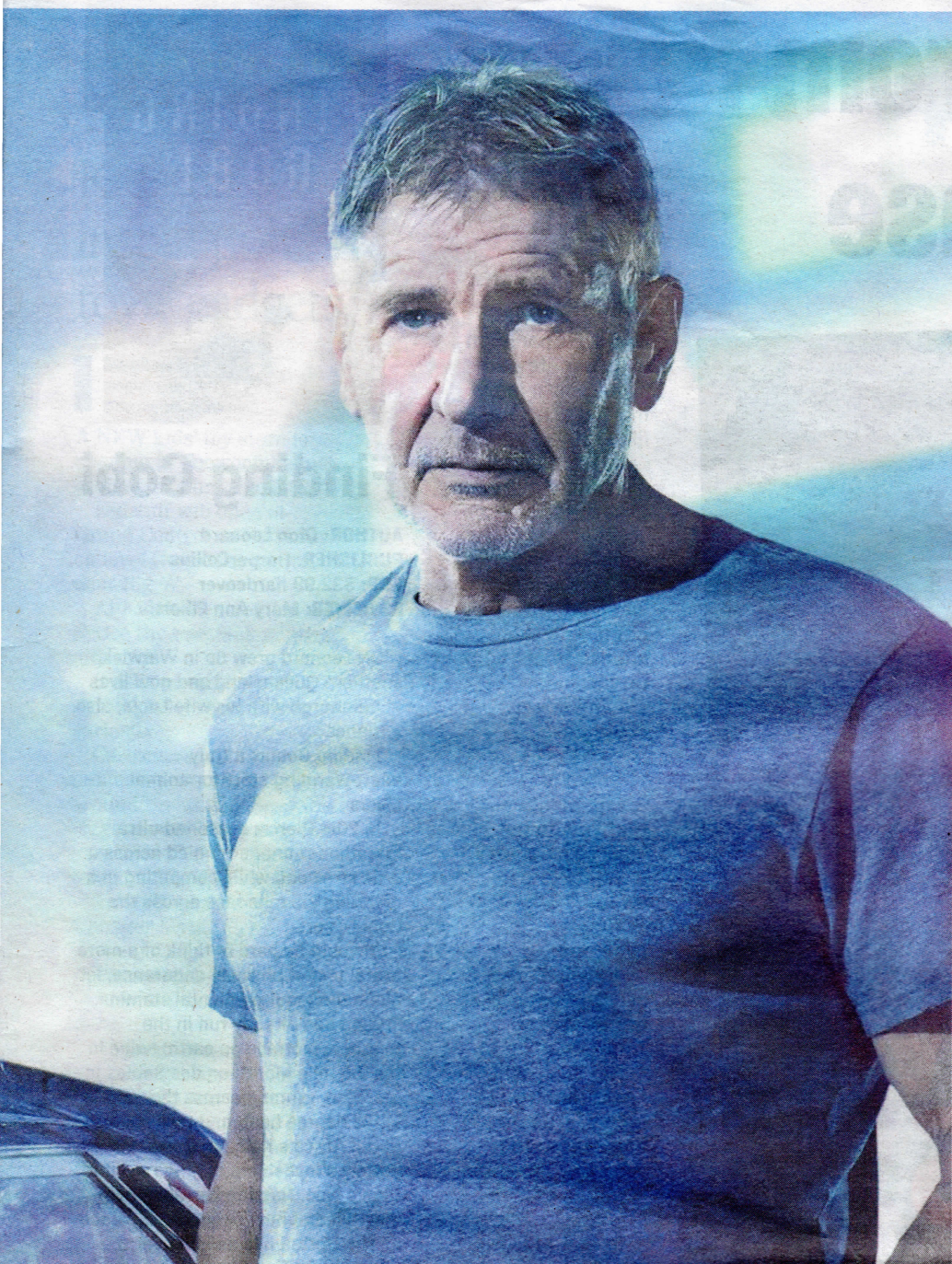
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Ryan Gosling in a scene from the movie Blade Runner 2049.



Ana de Armas and Ryan Gosling in a scene from the movie Blade Runner 2049.



STAR POWER: Ryan Gosling and Harrison Ford in Blade Runner 2049 (left).

ABOVE: Ryan Gosling in a scene from the movie. PHOTOS: COLUMBIA PICTURES

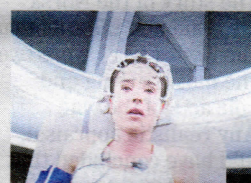
NOW SHOWING



Smashing tale

MOVIE: Battle of the Sexes
STARRING: Emma Stone, Steve Carell
RATING: PG

THIS quick-footed biopic takes its title from a farcical 1973 exhibition match — between Billie Jean King (Emma Stone) and ageing male tennis champion Bobby Riggs (Steve Carell).



Reboot flatlines

MOVIE: Flatliners
STARRING: Ellen Page, Diego Luna
RATING: M

FLATLINERS, Mark II, is more push-start than reboot.

The 25-year-old sci-fi classic might feel like a contemporary ride, but it has many of the same flaws as the original model.

Like the 1990 version, the new film features intelligent performances from a young-ish cast.

Juno's Ellen Page leads the ensemble as Courtney Holmes: a medical student haunted by her role in the car accident that resulted in the death of her sister. Obsessed with guilt, Courtney develops an experiment by which she can experience the afterlife for herself.

With the aid of her fellow students, Holmes intends to flatline for 60 seconds before being brought back to life to document the experience.

that's worth seeing

The movie alludes to an ecological disaster between the events of the original film and this instalment, clear in the ever-present storms that cloud Los Angeles.

The colour palette is more grey and muted than the gritty ochre hues of the 1982 movie. But that doesn't mean it's stark. Even in white-boxed rooms, there's a grime that tarnishes every surface - a grime that reminds you that this is a dystopian future, not a utopian one.

As ever, the sequel is

“Blade Runner 2049 is a more polished affair than its pioneering predecessor and it probably won't have the same lasting influence just by virtue of being a sequel. But it is truly a stunning cinematic experience.”

laden with symbolism but it's most concerned with the blurry line between what's real and what's not and who gets to decide what's real and what's not. Perhaps that's why Replicants are identified through their eyes - after all androids aren't supposed to have souls and

you know how the old saying goes.

There are certainly characters that challenge any black-and-white reading of the dichotomy but you could also see it in throwaway details, like the film's use of Sinatra and Elvis ditties. The songs and

holograms are mere facsimiles but the emotions they evoke are real.

You also can't help but get a kick out of a character ribbing Detective K for not liking “real girls”, hoping it's an extratextual reference to Gosling's Lars and the Real Girl.

The least successful aspect of the film is a miscast Jared Leto waxing lyrical about creation, tediously veering into the pretentious philosophising of Scott's Prometheus and Alien: Covenant.

But it's a small misstep in an otherwise impressive film.

Blade Runner 2049 is a more polished affair than its pioneering predecessor and it probably won't have the same lasting influence just by virtue of being a sequel.

But it is truly a stunning cinematic experience.

Dench stars in fascinating film

MOVIE: Victoria and Abdul
STARRING: Judi Dench, Ali Fazal
RATING: M
REVIEWER: Vicky Roach

A LONG time after John Brown... came Abdul Karim.

There are echoes of Queen Victoria's “inappropriate” relationship with her gallant Scottish servant in this autumnal postscript to Mrs Brown (1997), based on the true story of the

long-reigning monarch's unlikely friendship with an Indian clerk.

But if the courtiers were upset by the undue influence exerted by one of their own, imagine how they reacted when a Muslim infidel usurped their places in the Queen's affections.

Where the first film, directed by John Madden (Shakespeare In Love, The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel) took a fairly straightforward biographical approach to its subject, Victoria and Abdul plumps for a

heightened, quasi-satirical register.

This allows Stephen Frears (The Queen, Philomena) to touch upon some of the potentially ugly ramifications of the story without becoming too entangled by them.

His previous project, Florence Fosters Jenkins, about a tone-deaf heiress who funded her own Carnegie Hall concert, was similarly surface-skimming.

Abdul (Ali Fazal), who travels from Agra to

England to present her with a ceremonial coin, represents novelty and exoticism.

In his presence, Queen Victoria rediscovers an appetite for life.

Of course, it helps that the interloper is tall, dark, handsome and charming.

Before long, she appoints him as her teacher.

The courtiers, who have Abdul pegged as an opportunistic charlatan, are determined to reveal his true colours.

